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NO. 13.

"Alias Jimmy Valentine"

Novelized by FREDERIC R. TOOMBS From the Great Play by PAUL ARMSTRONG

CHAPTER VII.

Jimmy Valentine slowly recovered from the shock he experienced at beholding before him the man who had in the old days been his accomplice in many questionable adventures. No; he had concluded wrongly. No; he was not yet free from all the associations of the years past—those years which he was endeavoring to forget.

"Hello, Red," he finally addressed Flanagan. "Come out from behind the curtain. The coast is clear for you. How did you know I was here?"

Red came forth. "Oh, leave it to me, Jimmy, to keep track of an old pal. He held out his hand, which Valentine listlessly shook.

Red could not understand his former companion's indifferent manner.

"What's wrong?" he asked.

"Nothing."

"Aw, cut it out. Somethin's got you guessin', an' so don't try to kid me."

The released convict looked meditatively at Red. Then he spoke.

"Red, did you ever 'do a bit?'"

"Sure—Joliet."

"And you have been in one of those rotten holes and still think it's a good game?"

"You've weakened—eh?" sneered Red.

"I've turned square."

"You're crazy."

"No; it's only the man who thinks he can beat the law who's crazy," said Valentine.

"You'd a won out if it hadn't been for that Cotton, who blew on you because you beat him out of a dame."

Valentine turned and clutched him by the arm.

"You rat, don't you ever speak of her again or I'll murder you." He threw Red roughly away from him.

"Now, get out of here and forget you know me."

"Good God, Jimmy!" exclaimed the other, "I wouldn't say anything to hurt your feelings. Why, I'd do anything for you; I'd a done your bit if I could have. Why, I'll go to h—l for you."

"Will you turn square with me? That's all I want of you now. Let's you and I start now and from this minute on go square, if we starve in the streets. Will you do that, Red?" Valentine spoke in intense earnestness.

Red hesitated. "One job to get a stake and I'll go you," he said eagerly.

Valentine appreciated the characteristic unwillingness of Red to leave his lifelong vocation—that of rifling strong boxes and safes deemed by their manufacturers to be "fire and burglar proof." True, the flames were sometimes foiled by the thicknesses of metal and asbestos, but rarely had Red Flanagan been foiled by mere inanimate metal or time locks—rarely, indeed, when accompanied by No. 1289, the man who, as Warden Handler described him, opened safes solely by the sense of touch. Valentine knew the hold that the unlawful life he, too, had followed invariably secured on its votaries, and he was not surprised when Red hesitated to leave it for the dubious rewards of "going straight."

"No," answered Valentine; "nothing for me but work from now on—work, honest work, hard manual labor if necessary. I've quit the old game for keeps, Red."

Red, plainly nonplused at this revolutionary change of heart in his former "pal," stood speechless for a moment. Jimmy Valentine, the best man in the country in his line, had "turned square." Merciful saints! Was the world coming to an end? At last he recovered his ability to talk.

He had an inspiration that he thought might win Valentine over, might make him come to his senses.

"What about the coppers?" suggested Red. "Are you dippy enough to think they'd let you turn square?"

"Yes. Why not?" retorted Valentine like a flash. "What have they got to do with honest men?"

Again did Red find cause to actually doubt the sanity of his ex-confederate, for here he was overlooking entirely in his childish reasoning the remorseless, dismal certainty that the detectives would force him to "peach" on his old pals or any one else in the underworld of whom he could obtain information desired by the police. In short, Valentine had overlooked the "Stool pigeon game," the despair of every crook who had ever tried to "go straight."

"Aw, don't kid yourself," warned Red. "The copper 'll let you be square if you're a stool pigeon, if you tip off old pals. No other way."

"Absurd! How, for instance, could they 'do' me?"

"Absurd, eh? What about Kid Steele? He turned square, but he wouldn't squeal, and job after job they threw him out of till he was hungry in the street. Then a copper offered to stake him to a feed if he'd 'turn up' an old pal. And he murdered the cop on the spot, and now he's doing life. Turn square, eh? That means be a stool or a bum in our game."

Red raised his hands protestingly and turned his face away from Valentine.

"Beat the coppers," insisted the other. "Get away where they can't find you. We can do that."

"Yes, we can." Red again faced his friend. "Why, Doyle is in town to see you now."

"Doyle here?" in alarm.

"Yes. I met him when he got off the 'rattler.' He's going to give you your orders, and you'll have to do as he tells you if you turn square. He knows you beat it. He was laying for Avery when he came out and told him to report once a month. And what about Avery? You sent him to me, and we've been at work on something."

"Where is Avery?" asked Valentine quickly.

"Want to see him?"

"Yes; I can explain better." Valentine crossed the parlor and peered through the portieres.

Red went to the opposite doorway and softly called, "Oh, Bill!"

Avery, dressed in a roughly cut ready made suit of clothes and looking in much better health than he did on the day he defied Detective Doyle and finished his term in Sing Sing, came slowly into the hotel parlor.

"Hello, Bill! You're taking a chance," greeted Valentine, "and you are, too, Red."

"I had to see you," returned Avery. "I have just been telling Red"—

"Sure, I heard you hand out that 'square' talk. I suppose you want me to join you in this, 'going straight' business, too, eh?"

"I don't think the crooked game is any good. And you are getting old for clever work."

"Think so, eh?" snarled Avery suspiciously.

"He isn't too old to be an' outside man with us" put in Red.

"We don't need any outside man any more, Red," decided Valentine.

Avery glared into the speaker's face.

"ONE JOB TO GET A STAKE AND I'LL GO YOU."

"So you're out now, and you're going to throw Red and me out, eh? All this turning square talk I heard was a stall to get rid of me because I am old, eh?"

"I don't have to stall you, Avery."

The old thief leaned threateningly toward Valentine, shaking his withered fist as violently as the flabby muscles, sapped by years of prison air and prison fare, would permit.

"Like the d—l!" he cried, choking in his wrath. "I'm old, that's your dope. Going to throw me for a rookie, eh? Well, I'll show you. When guys start stalling me I'll show them up. From now on I'm a copper, and I'll show you up, Valentine. I'll get you, too—I'll get you good!"

Red Flanagan had won a continent wide reputation as a "smooth worker." He was one of those painstaking conscientious burglars, who followed habitually the laudable practice of looking after details. His employers, among whom had been Jimmy Valentine, "Chicago Whitey" and other leaders in their profession, had in the past shown a flattering willingness to recommend him (not in their own handwriting, to be sure) as a thorough artist, an untiring student and one who one day would probably revolutionize the business of caring for other people's money. In a word, Red was thorough, which means a great deal in his line.

So, true to his reputation, Red, fearing complications because of the pitch to which Avery had unconsciously raised his voice, had stepped behind the portieres to keep watch on the short hallway that led to it. This hallway opened out into the main hall of the hotel, at the far end of which was a carriage entrance. At the opposite side of the parlor was an exit leading to a dining room, which in turn had an opening directly next to the main entrance of the hotel. Red realized that a casual passerby might become suspicious of Avery's words should they be overheard. Besides, the implacable Doyle was in town. A friend of his, a "runner" for Doc Slater's faro bank, had so informed Red that very morning.

Red suddenly issued a warning hiss. "Duck, Avery! Here comes Doyle!"

The two thieves, having no opportunity to do better, hastily concealed themselves behind the portieres.

Valentine, very much disturbed, made an effort to calm himself. He seated himself beside a convenient table. He picked up a magazine and began to peruse its pages in seemingly unconcealed fashion.

"Hello, Jimmy!"

With these words Detective George Doyle entered the room. Garmented in the latest cut of fashionable clothing, panama hat and patent leather ties with batwing laces, he appeared the dilettante, the man about town, rather than the tracker of desperate men—the man of leisure, every inch of him, an uninitiated observer would have pardonably judged not only from his attire, but also from his debonair, blase manner. Any one describing Doyle as the man who broke up the "Five Points" gang and the "Whyo" gang in New York city would have been laughed at for his folly, yet such was his record. His work in scattering the troupes of election and primary day "floaters" and "repeaters" in some of the most disreputable districts was equally meritorious.

And yet Doyle had his other side. He was growing fond of the easy life that came from having a staff of "stool pigeons" to do his work for him.

Jimmy Valentine turned his head slightly to answer Doyle, who, he well knew, came on no errand that would benefit a released prisoner.

"How are you, Doyle?" he replied indifferently.

Doyle's shifting, farseeing eyes, however, caught the nervous twitching of Valentine's fingers as they ran over the edges of the magazine.

"You're perfectly innocent now, I hear," went on Doyle, a sarcastic note coming into his voice.

"Perfectly." Valentine's voice was as even as though conversing with his most intimate friend.

"So you told the governor?" commented the detective.

"Oh, yes!"

"I've seen the governor too."

"He didn't have much to do this morning, did he?" humorously.

"Very pretty, Jimmy. Let me ask you a question. Do you think I would be your friend if I could?"

"Do you think so yourself?"

"Yes, if you were willing to exchange the ordinary courtesies between friends."

"Meaning exactly what?"

"Favors. Now, I'll do the first one." He seated himself opposite the ex-convict.

"Thank you," in gay mood.

"Sarcasm won't win you anything with me, Jimmy. I said I'd do you a favor."

"What is it?" Valentine began to inspect his visitor anxiously.

The detective paused momentarily. Then he said deliberately:

"I'll—forget—that— job—you—did—at—Springfield—three—years—ago."

The detective leaned back in his chair, inserted his thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat and gazed fixedly at Jimmy Valentine.

The eyes of the man addressed became directed at the cover of the magazine he still held, but only for an instant. He shot a defiant glare at Doyle.

"I was never in Springfield in my life," he said indignantly.

"Which Springfield?" asked Doyle significantly.

"No Springfield."

"You dodge it nicely."

"I don't see how."

"Now, which Springfield did I think you were going to say?"

"I have no idea."

"Good again. Well, I'll tell you," continued Doyle. "I meant Springfield, Mass."

Valentine raised his brows doubtingly, innocently.

"I don't think I was ever in the state of Massachusetts."

"I can prove you were in Springfield, Mass., the night the safe in the savings bank was grabbed."

"Oh, no, you can't."

"Believe me, Jimmy, I can. The witness may be a bit disreputable, but I can prove it."

"You can job me, you mean. You can get fake witnesses?" Valentine asked excitedly.

"I can send you for five at least, my boy."

"But you won't if I do you a favor?"

"You are a very good guesser, James."

"Well?"

"I want Avery."

"Avery?"

"Bill Avery, who finished a nine year stretch a month ago and joined up with your old friend Red Flanagan."

Bill Avery, concealed behind the portieres with Red, gave a violent start as he heard Doyle's words. Red had all he could do to quiet him. The aged thief, however, managed to draw a 38 caliber revolver from a side pocket in his coat—quicker to get at than the hip pocket, and then this arrangement enables a man to stand with a hand carelessly thrust into a pocket and to discharge the pistol through the coat when dire emergency threatens.

"Curse him!" he whispered to Red. "I told him I'd get him if he turned square, and when Doyle goes I'll bore him through the mouth and into his brain."

"Serve him right!" hissed Red. "And two chances for a slick getaway. No guy can go on the square without goin' crooked with his pals."

[To be Continued.]

RULE OF THE ROAD.

Decided Abroad By the Sword and Here By the Gun.

Several travelers were seated in the hotel lobby discussing the difference in customs of the various countries they had visited. "What struck me as most peculiar abroad," said one, "is tne custom of keeping to the left instead of the right, as we do here. Why is the rule reversed?"

"I think I can explain that," said a reserved looking man in the corner. "In medieval and later periods abroad men were in the custom of wearing swords. The sword was worn, as it is now, on the left side. Consequently in drawing their weapon it was done with the right hand, and to get quickly upon guard a man had to have his right side to his opponent; hence the custom of keeping to the left.

"In America when every man carried his life in his hand on account of savage Indians all men carried guns. The easiest and most natural way to carry a gun, either afoot or mounted, is over the left arm with the muzzle pointed outward, and it takes but a very slight movement to throw the butt against the right shoulder. For that reason the early settlers kept to the right of the road so their weapons could instantly be brought to bear on any mark that was necessary."—Philadelphia Times.

Medical inspection of 1,000 5-year-old children in Surrey, England, revealed the fact that those who had several decayed teeth weighed on an average of 2.69 pounds less than those who had sound teeth.

Friendship void of romance is like an unpainted house.

Miscellaneous Reading.

HOW "SHEEP" ARE SHEARED.

Methods of the Bucket Shop For Separating the Easy Ones From Their Money.

This game is all shot to pieces and the bucketshops are the cause of it all," said an old time telegraph operator in the corridor of the board of trade the other day when asked why he could not get a position in some broker's office.

"Every victim stung by these vipers is supposed to have speculated on the board of trade and lost all his money, while the truth is the bucketshop got the money, although it is probably called the 'board of trade' in the gay burg in which the victim lives, and the Chicago board of trade often gets the blame for the victim's downfall.

"Why, I know of a Chicago bucketshop that was put out of business by John Hill, Jr. It had a wire to Temple, Tex., and was on the verge of closing, as all the intermediate offices on the private wire had quit and joined issues with a St. Louis or Kansas City concern. This western bucketshop was giving a better break on the commissions and not nipping as hard as the Chicago shop. They do this at the start to bait the new correspondent.

"Well, as I said, this Chicago bucketshop had only Temple, Tex., on its private wire, and the proprietors, Don Gideon and Cyclone Bill, asked Reddy Wood, the cashier and board marker, how much money there was in the damper (meaning the cash drawer). 'Seven cents,' replied Reddy. 'Say, Don,' said Bill, 'you're good on writing dope. Why don't you pick out a stock at the opening and flash it out to temple, as John Doe there is a pretty easy mark and a heavy trader? If you can get him agoing we will get on our feet again, and should it go against us, we will lock the joint up. We've got everything to win and nothing to lose. Should it pan out all right you go to all those towns we formerly had and get some well known, respectable citizen to open up for us, on commission and salary.'

"When the New York stock market opened that morning 'whisky' (distillers) opened 70, 71, 72. Don Gideon quickly wrote out the following: "Have good information that whisky will sell much higher; get busy before the fireworks start.' Don was the operator also, and started the opening market with sugar, Burlington, St. Paul, and then whisky at 70. He quoted a few other stocks and whisky 71 72.

"When 72 was sent out Temple sent the following order: 'Buy 1,000 whisky 72, margin one, protect nine, account John Doe.' Don came right back with 'Bot 1,000 whisky 72, M 1, P 9, acct. John Doe.' Don then glanced at the ticker and was horrified to see whisky 73, 74, 75, 76. Don quoted 73, 74. Then Temple started the following: 'Sell one thou—' Don quickly threw open the key and watched the ticker. Whisky came 75 and 74. Don and Cyclone Bill were cursing all the time. About 10 minutes after whisky quoted on the ticker 73, 72, 71, 70, and a minute later 69, 68, 67½ and back to 70. Don closed the key with a long sigh. Temple quickly asked: 'Did you get that order?' 'What order?' said Don. 'Why, I sent an order to sell 1,000 whisky at 74. Whisky has been to 76 and back to 67½ and is now 70. The wire has been open west for the last 15 minutes.' 'Can I do anything for you now?' said Don. Temple replied that John Doe was over at the bank and would be back soon with the bank wire for the margins and protection of the trade. About five minutes later Don got the bank wire stating that John Doe had deposited $10,000 to the credit of Don and Cyclone.

"After the close of the stock market that day Don sat down and wrote the following: 'William Hamm, Blank, Minn.—Dear Sir: We herewith inclose check for $38,632.50, being the profit of your whisky stock, which we closed out today at 75, this being within one point of the high market price for the day. Opened 70, high 76, low 67½ and closed 70½. Don't you think you ought to take profits on your corn and oats? We figure at tonight's close you have 105,000 bushels of May corn and 80,000 May oats, with a profit of 6 to 8 cents a bushel. Please wire us at our expense early Monday morning any instructions you may have. Also say whether we shall buy back a few thousand shares of whisky should the market work lower.'

"The above addressed to William Hamm, with check and statement, was put in John Doe's envelope and mailed. The statement and inclosure had the appearance of going through the hands of a dozen clerks with check marks and O. K.'s on them. That evening Don Gideon, Cyclone Bill, Reddy Wood, the cashier and board marker, and Oliver Bratton, a former silent partner to the extent of $50, were at Kingsley feasting on John Doe's life saver—$10,000.

"Monday morning following, about 8.40, Temple office sent the following: 'You have evidently made a mistake in your mailing department. I received check and statement for William Hamm, Blank, Minn. Shall I forward same?' Don quickly answered, saying it would be a great favor if Mr. Doe would forward the check, and that he would wire Mr. Hamm to forward his statement, as it was probably an oversight of some clerk in the mailing department. William Hamm was an operator working for a railroad and was always ready to help Don out according to instructions, as Don had often slipped him the price when he was on the block in Chicago, and knew he would receive a 'tip' for any turn he made for Don.

"It was needless to say that Mr. Doe had seen enough in the statement and check going to William Hamm to convince him the Chicago house was a reliable concern.

"To cut this short, whisky never stopped going down until it had reached the 20s, and Mr. Doe parted with some $42,000 in 42 days and used the money to start a business that averaged $984 a day profit for two years following.

"Do you wonder now why a lot of us have only our natural appetites and kicking because we can't catch on at some real broker's office on the real board of trade?"

"Say, Jack, let me tell you one," said another old timer. "When I was with Blank & Co. filling orders we had a wire west that had about 20 Jaytowns on it, and no competition. When wheat would open at 76½ to 77½ it was an easy matter to run it to 77½ if the victim wanted to buy or to 76½ if he wanted to sell. We had them going and coming, not a chance for a sharpshooter. I remember one day at the close we had orders to sell about 1,900 shares of sugar at 125. The close and high point for the day was 124¾. These 1,900 shares to be sold at 125 were mostly job lots of 10, 20 and 50 shares. Most of it was from Indiana, Illinois and Ohio towns, where other bucketshops were giving us a hard run to hold the business. But this day I mention we slipped one over on them that caused two to fall a month later on account of us getting the business.

"The boss said this day, 'we need this money, as the bank roll is getting low, so quote 125 at the close and fill every sugar order at that.'

"Some of these clients had trades with our competitors and some were exact duplicates. You can imagine the kick that was made to the other houses when they were told 124¾ was the high and close. They showed their statements showing they had sold at 125. The next morning sugar opened at 125 to 125¼. This showed us good. Some of the jay papers wrote us up as the squarest people that ever did business there, etc. When the other bucketshops gave up we started in trimming the lambs right and left, as we could juggles the quotations at will.—Chicago Tribune.

RAILWAY TRAVEL IN INDIA.

Supplying Water to "Caste" Men—A Fakir's Chains.

An Indian railway time table affords interesting study. It combines voluminous railway information with a considerable amount of matter particularly interesting to the tourist. Caste does not cause the railways so much trouble as might be imagined, judging by all one hears about it in England. Indeed caste distinctions are found to resolve into two main principles. One only concerns us here, the other—the prohibition of intermarriage—having reference to matters outside the radius of a railway official's activities.

A "caste" man must not partake of food cooked or even handled by one of inferior caste. Food is a wide term. A very orthodox person would include medicine compounded by an apothecary. One of more liberal views might receive, say, a plantain (banana) from the hands of an individual beneath him, for the "unclean" hands of the latter would have come in contact only with the skin and not with the part to be eaten.

The first and most obvious requirement of any long distance traveler in a hot climate is fluid refreshment. The filter and the glass commonly found in an English dining car would be no use in India, inasmuch as the native would first of all want to know who put the water in the filter and then who last used the glass. If satisfactorily assured on the latter point, he would nevertheless run no risk of contamination, but would pour the liquid down his throat while holding the glass a few inches above his mouth.

But the orthodox man, taking no risks at all, carries with him a brass water pot attached to a belt, and even then adopts the further precaution above mentioned. At every station a native patrols the platform carrying a skin with a supply of water. Experience has taught the railway companies to be particular as to who is entrusted with this duty. Continuing, the writer says:

I once traveled with a Brahmin who parched with thirst eagerly called the water carrier at each successive station. But before replenishing his brass pot he crossed-examined the man as to his antecedents and not being satisfied that he was a sufficiently high caste continued suffering agonies till a wire was sent on ahead, the result of which was that the holiest man of all the countryside was routed out and induced to do duty pro tem.

Fortunately very holy people seldom travel and when they do they contrive to let it be known beforehand so that meals may be specially prepared for them in advance.

On another occasion a celebrated fakir was proposing to travel. His form of self-mortification took the shape of some two hundredweight of chain with which his body was girded and with which he tried to enter the carriage assisted by his friends.

But the station master was there, and the result of a somewhat heated argument conducted in a language which for possibilities of vituperation has no equal in the world was that the fakir and his chains were hauled off to the weighing machine and full passenger parcel rate was charged on the two hundredweight to old iron on the reasonable ground that it could not be regarded as wearing apparel.

The Hindu likes to have all his savings in a portable form. They do not take the shape of scrip and title deeds, but bars, anklets and armlets of gold and rudely set jewelry. When he travels all this wealth is frequently entrusted to the keeping of a younger daughter, whose little legs and arms are wound round with golden bars, while her nose and ears are heavily weighted with jewelry. I once saw on a station platform a little girl about 6 who was computed to be worth about £6,000 as she stood.

This practice is not, however, so common as it used to be, for railways naturally disclaim liability in such cases and there have, moreover, been so many nameless outrages on little girls for the sake of plunder.—Railway Magazine.

Caring For Birds In New Jersey.—Birds and the small wild animals in this township were hard pressed for food during the days the ground was all covered with snow. The miller at Hancock's Bridge scattered a little seed in front of the mill door, and larks, some of them so weak they could scarcely walk, and other birds gathered there and ate, not afraid of man or the moment, so emboldened were they to hunger.

A turkey buzzard entered a farmer's hen roost for shelter and was removed to his pig pen. So hard pressed for food was it that it ate corn.—Lower Creek correspondence Salem Sunbeam.

THE NEW PENMANSHIP.

Once Popular Vertical Writing Has Been Abandoned.

There are probably few households in New York where the parents have failed to notice a change of some sort in the writing of children who attend the schools. This change ranges from a total destruction of legibility to the acquistion of a beautiful, fluent style of writing. What has happened to bring about this revolution?

"Some eight or ten years ago," says a New York teacher in Teacher and Home, "Young Lockinvar came out of the west in the person of A. N. Palmer, an expert writing master with a method and a mission. The method was, in a word, the idea of training the teacher to do first what he requires his pupil to do afterward.

"The mission was to convince school authorities that their writing was a failure and to induce them to adopt a more excellent way. Today the writing crusade is a nationwide affair. Every school in Greater New York is a veritable writing fest.

"In every one of the sixteen grades the children are obliged to practise the arm movement writing. Tons of paper are consumed daily in the process by nearly 700,000 children. Instead of laboriously imitating a set copy by slow finger movement, the pupil trains his muscles to perform certain swings, glides and strokes automatically, and much of the practice of actual writing consists in copying or taking from dictation entire pages of literary matter.

"Vertical writing, once almost universal, has completely disappeared. It started upon its career in Germany as a result of a learned commission which investigated the cause of curvature of the spine among school children. Not only this deformity but defective vision as well were traced to malposition in writing.

"It was ascertained by the commission that 20 per cent of boys and 40 per cent of girls have one shoulder higher than the other; while 90 per cent of spinal curvature was found to be developed during school life. Similar facts were discovered concerning myopia. Special defects were traced to the collapsed position in writing, which in addition to these injuries, inflicts others that affect the general health by retarding circulation and improperly filling the lungs with air.

"There are four possible positions for the paper in writing, which may be designated as the right square, the right oblique, the front oblique and the front square. All authorities on school hygiene have been agreed for thirty years that the first two positions are bad both for the eyes and for the spine. A slight observation will convince any one that in either case one eye is nearer the paper than the other. In the effort at accommodation both eyes are liable to be injured.

"In one investigation, one of 21,949 persons examined, 5,295, or 24 per cent, were more myopic in the right eye than the left. Out of 3,263 cases examined by Schubert, 2,032, or 62 per cent, were more myopic in the left eye than in the right. Myopia itself is a disease induced by civilization, and is unknown among savages. That the schools are responsible for very much of it is shown by the fact that it increases steadily among children as they advance from grade to grade.

"The excess of myopia in the left eye over that of the right is attributed by Schubert to writing. When it is remembered that from 3,000 to 6,000 hours of a child's school life are spent in writing and that this occurs during the period of growth and development, when organs are plastic, one can readily believe that so long a period of work requiring a nearer adjustment in the left eye than in the right is likely to produce a permanent difference in the structure of the two eyes.

"As a result of these famous investigations vertical writing swept over Europe and America. The slogan was: The body straight! the paper straight! the writing straight! It was a purely hygienic reform. No more than seven years ago the writer delivered a lecture in which he proved conclusively (to his own satisfaction) that vertical writing is an essential if the human race is to endure!

"But gradually one difficulty after another became apparent. The writing was so straight that it leaned backward. A very large percentage of vertical writers are backhanders. If there is anything more hideous and illegible than a backhanded scrawl I know not where to find it. In spite of various speed tests, which seemed to prove that vertical writing is faster than slant, it remained a fact that vertical writers as a rule were very slow.

"There arose, therefore, a new style of writing known as the half slant. It was also a finger movement, but was a compromise between the thirty-eight degree slant of the Spencerian system and the vertical. At one time this was the panacea for all writing ills! The New York board of superintendents advised all principles to adopt it.

"Most of the schools, however, continued the vertical system, as was shown by the fact that in the work selected by this same board of superintendents for exhibition at the Paris exposition twenty-three out of twenty-eight schools chosen were represented by vertical writing.

"The result was a medley of styles that continued down to within about a year ago, when the present board of superintendents issued an order forbidding the use of copy books and demanding arm movement writing in all schools. The effect of permitting various styles had been most unfortunate. A child during a single term might be transferred to three different schools each using a different system of penmanship. The public justly complained that children could not write a legible hand, and at last came the reformer out of the west who has shown us the promised land.

"I examined two schools last week and tested twenty or thirty classes in spelling. Every now and then, while the teacher was dictating the words, I unconsciously would say: 'You are dictating too rapidly.' And the teacher would say: 'No, there is plenty of time.' I forgot that it was a Palmer school and that they were learning to write fast.

"What will be the outcome of the present writing crusade it is hard to predict, because educational fashions change almost as frequently as the style of a woman's hat. But if we really succeed in the reform I think the business world will be pleased. Innumerable cases have been reported of children who secured excellent positions through their writing ability."—New York Sun.

RURAL PROGRESS.

What the Telephone Does For the Farmer.

Wherever the wires of the telephone have been spread in backward rural communities there has been a striking change in the living conditions of the people.

The little instrument hanging on the wall has brought these semiexiles back into touch with their kind. The father, the mother and the children all share in the awakening from the mental torpor induced by isolation. All are now in immediate touch with true communal life.

To the mother, perhaps, the change means most. No longer will the county asylums record as a fact that the greater number of their inmates are farmers' wives—poor, pale, discontented women, who for years managed to live through the drudgery of their lonely lives only from a sense of duty, and who at last succumbed to the melancholy of isolation. A few moments taken from her work and spent in gossip with some of her neighbors, maybe in the big city, and Phyllis returns to her duties in another and happier frame of mind.

The motives that impelled the children to the city are losing their power. The children on the farms, particularly in the west, where the farms are large, used to dread their isolation. They had to help in the farm work and there were few papers and books for them in the evening. The traveling library and rural free delivery bring the news and stores of literature and the telephone the use of the most prized of human possessions—speech with our neighbors.

The farmer himself has broadened; his senses and emotions answer with new activity—he installs modern methods in all departments. Through modern machinery he escapes much of the terrible backbreaking routine of his early days.

After the telephone is installed nothing of importance happens in the world which is not known to him. Keeping in close touch with the markets, he is able to sell at the right time and to the best advantage. His mind is now pleasantly active, his time is more fully occupied, but better distributed and to better advantage.

He works more with his head and less with his hands.

In a hundred ways the telephone helps him. Does he break an important part of one of his machines? Instead of having to take a twenty or thirty mile drive he instructs the hardware store by telephone to send it by the driver of the rural free delivery. The wife no more has to wait for repairs to washing machine or stove until the farmer drives to the county seat. Talking through the hole in the wall, she gets them the next day.

Think of the reduction of time and suffering when the doctor can be summoned over the wire. Oftentimes life itself is saved.

A forecast of storms is often made a sufficient time ahead to enable the farmer to care for his stock and save them from destruction.

The telephone is thus an all-important factor in the life of those on the farm, an invaluable contribution to their safety, prosperity and happiness.

The rush from the farms to large cities to escape hardships and isolation will probably cease to a large degree. Indeed, the tide may turn and run the other way, as people realize that the city saps strength and vitality and that these can best be regained by living in the open air and in close communion with nature. And this back-to-the-farm movement will be accelerated in no small degree through the knowledge of what the telephone is contributing to rural life in the shape of intellectual stimulus and material well-being.—Farmers and Drovers' Journal.

$1,900 From One Acre.

The principal fruit growing sections of Colorado are located in the fertile valleys of the western slope of the Rockies. From the Grand Valley last year, 1910, there were shipped over three thousand carloads of fruit, more than the combined outputs of Oregon, Washington and Idaho.

This immense output was harvested from a strip of valley land not more than twenty-five miles in length and only about eight or ten miles wide. This valley is favored by a climate most delightful. Many winters the temperatures do not descend to the zero point.

The length of the growing season is longer than any other fruit growing section in the west, exclusive of Arizona and California, and there is an average of one hundred and ninety-six days between frosts.

All the varieties of California and European grapes flourish in this valley and yield not uncommonly from $100 to $200 per acre. The yields per acre of apples amount to $1,000. The Rev. J. A. Becker of Grand Junction sold from his orchard of Jonathans $1,900 worth of fruit from a single acre.—Christian Herald.

Fish That Shoot Flies.—In Queensland some of the most interesting forms of animal life are to be found. The duck-billed platypus (with the web feet of a duck, which lays eggs and suckles young,) the lung fish, the walking perch and many other queer creatures might be mentioned in confirmation of this. A remarkable little fish is the rifle fish, which lives in the far northern rivers of Queensland. A full-grown specimen (writes a correspondent) measures about ten inches in length and averages one and a half pounds in weight. The rifle fish derives its name from the fact that it shoots its food. It swims leisurely about the stream, a few inches below the surface, and is always on the lookout for flies and other insects that settle on the floating leaves and twigs or on the surface of water plants. On getting close enough to its victim it discharges a tiny jet or ball of water, which, if shot straight, knocks the fly into the stream, where it is instantly gathered in by the shooter.—London Globbe.

UNIQUE HUNTING METHODS.

How the Australian Black Fellows Stalk Their Game.

"One afternoon when I was quite a small boy living in the heart of the Australian bush," says a writer in the American Boy, "a blackfellow, his wife and their two children were camped near the creek which ran through our farm. They had just arrived and were both tired and hungry.

"So the blackfellow walked down to the edge of the creek and had a look around. Soon he saw a pair of wild turkeys, or bustards, feeding quietly along a wide open space and about 800 yards away. Now, wild turkeys are very good eating, but they are very shy birds and difficult to get near.

"The blackfellow had no gun, but had three boomerangs, four spears and a club called the nulla nulla. I watched him carefully to see what he would do. He took the three boomerangs and the nulla nulla. Then he broke several branches of a neighboring tree and swam quietly across the creek. On the other side he skirted around the edge of the clearing, getting as close to the turkeys as he could under cover.

"I soon lost sight of him and kept my eyes on the turkeys. After about a quarter of an hour I suddenly noticed well out on the clearing a bunch of shrubbery. Watching it carefully, I saw that it was gradually approaching the birds. It never moved except when the birds had their heads down feeding.

"At last it got so close that the turkeys noticed it, but beyond a good stare they paid no further attention to it. Nearer and nearer it approached until it was only about twenty yards away. Then with a jump that made me start the blackfellow sprang up from behind the boughs and, running into the birds, threw his boomerangs at them. He seemed to hit both of them, but one flew away all the same. The other one, however, was disabled and the blackfellow soon finished it off with his club.

"It is the fashion to speak contemptuously of the intellect of the Australian blacks; certainly in some respects they are very deficient. I never met one, for example, that could count more than five, and most of them can only count up to three. But, as hunters they are extremely skillful, very patient, and possessed of a great fund of knowledge regarding the habits of the game they pursue.

"I have seen them catch ducks in much the same manner as the turkey was caught. The hunter, with a bundle of reeds, or other aquatic vegetation, slips quietly into the edge of the lake or lagoon or river, and either wades or swims with the vegetation on his head, noiselessly up to the ducks. Then, one after another he quietly but swiftly pulls them under water, where he strangles them and attaches them to his belt.

"It would be thought that the ducks would either call out or flap their wings and so alarm their mates; but the blackfellow does his work so smartly that the duck is underneath the water before it has time to do anything.

"The kangaroo is stalked in quite a different and rather a peculiar manner. Finding where there is a kangaroo, feeding alone if possible, the blackfellow crawls as close as he can to him. His weapons this time are two spears. When there is no more cover he waits until the kangaroo has its head down and is nibbling the grass. Then he stands up beside a tree in full view of the kangaroo but absolutely motionless.

"The kangaroo looks up, but seeing nothing moving, resumes feeding. The blackfellow then takes a few slow and very cautious steps toward the animal, dragging his two spears carefully through the grass with his toes. The moment the kangaroo stops feeding he becomes immovable, standing, with his hands at his side, like a thin black stump.

"This strategy goes on for perhaps twenty minutes, at the end of which the blackfellow is probably within ten yards of his prey. Then, like a lightning flash, he bends for his spears, and one after the other they are flung quivering into the flanks of the kangaroo. The animal bounds off, but the blackfellow follows confidently, as he knows that before the second mile is covered the kangaroo will be exhausted.

"This is the usual way in which the kangaroo was taken. Occasionally, however, it was killed with a boomerang. The kangaroo has a very thin skull, and if the boomerang hits it on the head it drops instantly.

"The boomerangs I have been mentioning do not return to their owners, as all boomerangs are so often stated to do. Boomerangs used for killing game or in war just go for the object aimed at; and whether they hit or miss they never come back, but end their course just like any other missile. The returning boomerang is really a toy, and is specially constructed. It is made and used by the same blackfellow that uses the game and war boomerang.

"Perhaps the most ingenious of all their schemes is the manner in which they net ducks. A creek is chosen which has, as creeks usually do, short bushy trees along its banks. Between two of these trees, on opopsite sides, the blacks stretch their light, home made net, at a height of ten or fifteen feet above the water. The net is managed by two black fellows, one on each side of the stream, who have hold of the top controlling cord. Until the critical time the net is allowed to sag well down.

"A few yards down the creek a third blackfellow is concealed in the reeds. Two or three others then make a detour of perhaps a mile or more and strike the creek again. Then they walk back along the creek toward the net. At once whatever ducks are on the creek fly up and, as is their invariable custom, follow along the course of the creek, but about 100 yards or so in the air.

"Soon they come toward where the net is waiting. Just at the proper time the blackfellow who is hidden in the reeds gives the loud, shrill cry of the duck hawk, at the same time hurling his boomerang into the air. Like so many arrows the terrified ducks dive down for the shelter of the trees and dart along only a few feet above the water.

At the same time the net rises in front of them, and they dash into it. Sometimes the whole flock of a dozen or more is caught at once, and it is rarely that the stratagem is altogether unsuccessful.